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ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/49/L.37/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

Statement by the Secretary-General

I. Activities proposed in the draft resolution and their relationship to the approved programme of work for 1994-1995

1. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 12, 13 and 15 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would:

"Request the Secretary-General to enable relevant regional commissions to support activities to coordinate the implementation of the Conference outcomes at the regional and subregional levels by, inter alia, providing the necessary autonomy and adequate resources to their subregional offices and operational centres, in accordance with paragraph 134 of the Programme of Action, taking into account the decentralization process" (para. 12);

"Also request the Secretary-General to ensure that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has a strengthened capacity to carry out, in accordance with its mandate, the research and analysis necessary to complement the work of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat with respect to the implementation of the Programme of Action" (para. 13);

"Further request the Secretary-General to establish within the Department for the Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development a clearly identifiable, qualified and competent entity with the resources and number of professionals and support staff that are necessary to undertake its broad range of functions in support of the system-wide implementation of the Programme of Action relying on the most efficient and cost-effective use of resources, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 123 of the Programme of Action" (para. 15).

2. It will be noted that paragraphs 123 and 134 of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States, referred to in operative paragraphs of the draft resolution quoted above, read as follows:

"123. It is essential for the follow-up to the Conference and the implementation of the Programme of Action that a clearly identifiable, qualified and competent entity within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat be put in place to provide secretariat support for both intergovernmental and inter-agency coordination mechanisms. To that end, the necessary resources should be provided, relying on the most efficient and cost-effective use of resources, to fulfil the following functions:

"(a) Provide substantive secretariat support to intergovernmental and inter-agency processes related to the monitoring, review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action;

"(b) Act as a liaison and focal point for Governments, organs, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on matters related to the follow-up to the Conference and the implementation of the Programme of Action;

"(c) Prepare reports to be submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other relevant bodies, on the implementation of the Programme of Action, drawing on the inputs from all appropriate sources;

"(d) Provide support, as appropriate, to other activities emanating from the Programme of Action."

"134. Each of the relevant regional commissions of the United Nations should be enabled to support regional activities to coordinate the implementation of Conference outcomes at the regional level, including providing the necessary autonomy and adequate resources to their subregional offices and operational centres, taking into account the ongoing process of decentralization. That would involve:

"(a) Assisting regional and subregional organizations and mechanisms involved in the promotion of sustainable development, as appropriate;

"(b) Acting as a point of liaison between United Nations agencies and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the

United Nations Secretariat in New York, and among United Nations agencies at the regional and subregional levels." 1/

3. It should also be recalled that, at the time of the adoption of the Programme of Action by the Conference, a statement of the programme budget implications in relation to chapter D, Institutional arrangements, monitoring and review of the draft programme, had been submitted to the Conference by the Secretariat, in accordance with provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/189 and rule 16 of the rules of procedure of the Conference.

4. The activities of the Secretariat relating to the follow-up to the Conference fall under programme 46, Sustainable development, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was proposed in the context of the latest revision of the medium-term plan and reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-forth session earlier this year. 2/ Due to the timetable for convening the Conference, these activities were not programmed in the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

II. Activities to be implemented and relevant resource requirements for the biennium 1994-1995

5. The following activities by the Secretariat are foreseen for the current biennium in the context of implementation of the Programme of Action:

(a) The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development would assume responsibility for promotion of the implementation of the Programme of Action. In this context the Department would maintain continuous and extensive contacts with government officials, both in small island developing States and their development partners, and with representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to discuss ways and means of tackling the priority issues and the course of action relating to the implementation of the Programme; coordinate the activities under the Programme with the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, in particular with UNDP, and with UNCTAD and relevant regional commissions; contribute to fund-raising activities to mobilize the adequate financial resources, in accordance with chapter 33 of Agenda 21; and keep abreast of developments and gather information on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The Department would also assume responsibility for assisting the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development in the system-wide coordination of aspects relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action. In this context the Department would be responsible for providing information for the Committee on the on-going requirements of the small island developing States and on activities undertaken under the Programme. Finally, the Department would be responsible for the preparation of various reports to and substantive servicing of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Sustainable Development and other intergovernmental bodies on the issues relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action. Among the reports to be submitted would be an annual report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, periodic reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development or inputs thereto on the implementation of the Programme of Action in the context of the

Commission's multi-year thematic programme of work, reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development on the results of the reviews of the progress achieved and steps taken for the implementation of the Programme and other relevant reports;

(b) UNCTAD would assume responsibility for the development and implementation of a policy-oriented programme aimed at strengthening the export capacities of the small island developing States with a view to increasing those countries' competitiveness on the world market; developing in cooperation with relevant regional commissions, a mechanism for improving of the regional cooperation arrangements in the fields of trade, sea and air transport, communications, science and technology, human resources development, tourism, banking, insurance and institutional capacity-building and for carrying out necessary follow-up activities; monitoring activities on the implementation of multilateral trade agreements affecting the small island developing States; conducting studies and research on and backstopping technical assistance projects for those countries; providing substantive support and servicing to intergovernmental and expert group meetings on issues relating to small island developing States;

(c) Regional commissions would assume responsibility for coordination of the activities in the context of implementation of the Programme of Action at regional and subregional levels. To that end the regional commissions would: monitor the economic, social and environmental processes taking place in the small island developing States in their respective regions and advise them on appropriate country policies and programmes in support of their sustainable development, upon request; in cooperation with UNDP, specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system, and with regional and subregional financial organizations, undertake activities that ensure directing appropriate aid flows for those countries and maintain information systems on those flows, by donor, recipient country and sectoral destination; monitor the implementation of regional and country programmes and projects in the context of the Programme of Action; regularly report on activities undertaken and progress achieved in implementation of the Programme to their relevant regional intergovernmental bodies.

6. In order to adequately meet the above responsibilities, the existing coordinating and research capacity of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, UNCTAD and relevant regional commissions would need to be strengthened.

7. In this context and in line with provisions of operative paragraph 12 of the draft resolution, the establishment of one additional P-4 post, each, would be necessary in Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Economic Commission for Africa. Each post would be for an economic affairs officer who would concentrate primarily on the implementation of the Programme of Action. The post in ESCAP would be deployed in the Pacific Operational Centre of the Commission in Vanuatu. The incumbent would assist the Head of the Centre in carrying out the responsibilities detailed in paragraph 5 (c) above. The post in ECLAC would be deployed at the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago. The incumbent would assist the Head of the

Office in carrying out the responsibilities detailed in paragraph 5 (c) above. In ECA the post would be located at its headquarters in Addis Ababa in the Social-economic Research and Planning Division which deals with the activities relating to the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries. The incumbent would assist the Head of the Division in carrying out the responsibilities detailed in paragraph 5 (c) above.

8. In line with operative paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, it is proposed to strengthen the existing capacity of UNCTAD in relation to the activities under the Programme of Action by providing one additional P-4 post for the Division for Least Developed, Land-locked and Island Developing Countries. The incumbent of the post would assist the Chief of the Land-locked and Island Developing Countries Branch of that Division in carrying out the responsibilities detailed in paragraph 5 (b) above.

9. In line with operative paragraph 15 of the draft resolution, it is proposed to create a small island developing States unit within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to provide substantive support and services to the intergovernmental and inter-agency coordinating mechanisms and carry out other responsibilities outlined in paragraph 5 (a) above. For that purpose one P-5, one P-4 and one General Service (Other Levels) posts would be required, on the understanding that, in implementing the Programme of Action, the Unit would also draw on the existing capacity of the Department, particularly the Division for Sustainable Development, as and when required. The P-5 post would be for a Chief of the Unit who would be responsible for supervising and coordinating the work of the Unit under the Programme of Action. The P-4 post would be for an economic affairs officer who would assist the Chief of the Unit in organizing support and servicing of the intergovernmental and inter-agency meetings on issues relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action, maintain liaison with relevant agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and contribute to the preparation of their respective reports.

10. All the posts discussed in paragraphs 7-9 above would be new posts to be established effective 1 January 1995. The related costs would amount to $380,500. In addition, a provision in the amount of $95,100 would be required for staff assessment.

11. In addition to the staff resources proposed in paragraph 9 above, a provision in the amount of $80,000 would be required for the Small Island Developing States Unit in the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development in 1995 for its operational requirements. Of this amount, an amount of $30,000 would be required for consultancies in the event that internal expertise would not be available to conduct specific research, in particular for the preparation of the reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its third session in 1995 in the context of its consideration of cross-sectoral issues; an amount of $30,000 would be required for convening an ad hoc expert group meeting to undertake a review of and make recommendations on the development of vulnerability indices for the small island developing States as an input to the relevant report to the Commission on Sustainable Development; and an amount of $20,000 would be required for travel of staff to participate in

relevant meetings, including the session of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development.

12. In total, the resource requirements for the year 1995 in the context of the draft resolution would amount to $460,500, broken down by budget section as follows:

Section 8.	Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	$230 500
Section 11A.	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	66 800
Section 15.	Economic Commission for Africa	66 000
Section 16.	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	53 400
Section 18.	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	43 800
	Total	$460 500

III. Contingency fund

13. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund was established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Further, each statement of programme budget implications and each proposal for revised estimates should contain alternatives to the financing from the contingency fund of the proposed new activities.

14. It has not been possible to identify activities within sections 8, 11A, 15, 16 and 18 which could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium in order to identify relevant posts and other resources to finance the net additional costs of the above activities. In the event that resources from the contingency fund are not available to finance the activities, implementation of the activities will be postponed to the biennium 1996-1997.

IV. Action required of the General Assembly

15. The following activities in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action, to be endorsed in draft resolution A/C.2/37/Rev.1, are proposed for approval for the year 1995 under the following sections of programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

Section 8. Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

C. Programme of work

2. Sustainable development

Paragraph 8.75 Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "Moreover, the Division, through the Small Island Developing States Unit, will be responsible for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as adopted at the Conference on 6 May 1994 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/__ of __ December 1994, including substantive support to and services of the intergovernmental and inter-agency processes in that field and promotional and catalytic activities in relation to the Programme of Action."

Activities

I. International cooperation

Add the following words at the end of the sentence: "... and on matters relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States."

II. Parliamentary services

(a) Parliamentary documentation:

(i) Add the following words at the end of the sentence: "... a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States by the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;"

(ii) Add the following words at the end of the sentence: "... a report to the Commission on Sustainable Development (third session) on implementation of the Programme of Action in the context of its multi-year thematic programme and review of the cross-sectoral issues;"

(b) Ad hoc expert groups: add at the end of the sentence: "... ad hoc expert group on the development of vulnerability indices for small island developing states (1995);"

Section 11A. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

C. Programme of work

Programme 15. Least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and special programmes

Paragraph 11A. 125 Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "In the carrying out the above activities, emphasis will be placed on and solutions

proposed for the problems identified in the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States."

Section 15. Economic Commission for Africa

C. Programme of work

1. Development issues and policies

Paragraph 15A.17 Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "Coordination of the regional and subregional activities in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States will be undertaken. In this context monitoring of economic, social and environmental processes in the small island developing States will be initiated, appropriate programmes of assistance will be identified, and measures to encourage aid flows to these countries will be taken."

Section 16. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

C. Programme of work

6. Least developed, land-locked and island developing countries

Paragraph 16.52 Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: "Coordination of the regional and subregional activities in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States will be undertaken. In this context monitoring of economic, social and environmental processes in the small island developing states will be initiated, appropriate programmes of assistance will be identified, and measures to encourage aid flows to these countries will be taken."

Section 18. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

C. Programme of work

Subprogramme 13. Subregional activities in the Caribbean

Paragraph 18.71 Add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph. "Coordination of the regional and subregional activities in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States will be undertaken. In this context monitoring of economic, social and environmental processes in the small island developing States will be initiated, appropriate programmes of assistance will be identified, and measures to encourage aid flows to these countries will be taken."

16. Subject to the guidelines for the use and operation of the contingency fund, the Secretary-General would request an additional appropriation of $460,500 for the biennium 1994-1995, broken down as follows:

	$
Section 8	230 500
Section 11A	66 800
Section 15	66 000
Section 16	53 400
Section 18	43 800

In addition, an amount of $95,100 for staff assessment would be required under section 28, Staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

Notes

1/ Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 94.I.18 and Corrigenda).

2/ See A/49/6 (Prog. 46); A/49/16 (part II), paras. 92-95.
